

INDIGENOUS Fauna



Australian White Ibis
Threskiornis molucca
This bird uses its sensitive curved bill to probe water and mud for food. Its diet consists of crustaceans, insects, fish, snails and frogs. Found mainly around swamps and wetlands, this bird can travel long distances to find suitable habitat, often flying in groups in a V formation.



Eastern Spinebill
Acanthorhynchus tenuirostris
This honeyeater has a very long bill used for probing into flowers, and a bristly tongue for licking nectar. They also eat insects and are often seen in native gardens, visiting correas and banksias. The female makes a small cup shaped nest of grasses and fibres, lining it with feathers or hair. Encourage them into your garden by planting a wide range of indigenous shrubs.



Magpie-lark
Grallina cyanoleuca
Common in urban areas and close to water, the Magpie-lark makes a nest of plant fibres bound by mud. Distinctively patterned in black and white, this bird walks along bobbing its head in time with its feet, looking for worms, insects and larvae. It has a piping 'pee o wit' call and a courtship display involving bowing and tail fanning.



Red Wattlebird
Anthochaera carunculata
This bird gets its name from the red lobes of skin (or wattles) on their cheeks. They are aggressive and territorial, often calling raucously and chasing other birds away. They are Honeyeaters, with brush-tipped tongues for obtaining nectar and pollen. They also eat insects, either caught in flight or taken from leaves or bark. Common in urban gardens.

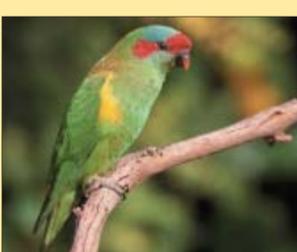
Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Coracina novaehollandiae
A light grey bird with a black face and outer feathers. They make a distinctive small saucer-shaped nest, bound by cobwebs. Feeding on large insects and occasionally fruit, they have also been known to take nestlings of other birds. Its call is a metallic grinding 'churrink'.



Eastern Yellow Robin
Eopsaltria australis
Flitting quietly from branch to branch, then darting to the ground to pick up prey, this bird is easily recognised by its bright yellow breast. This robin perches sideways on vertical branches, which gives it a good view but offers some protection as well. Their diet includes bugs, spiders, moths, grasshoppers and other insects. This bird makes a cup-shaped nest of bark, twigs, moss and cobwebs in the fork of a tree.



Musk Lorikeet
Glossopsitta concinna
Flocks of Musk Lorikeets can be seen in flowering Eucalypt trees feeding on pollen and nectar. Similar in size to other lorikeets, the musk has quite a short tail, with red along the side of the neck and forehead and yellow patches on their sides. Very vocal when feeding, chattering and screeching loudly.



Superb Fairy-wren
Malurus cyaneus
Common in urban shrubs and woodland, these birds hop and flit about foraging for food. They eat a wide variety of small insects. The female is a grey brown color, whilst the male has a sky blue crown and upper back. This bird lives in family groups comprising an adult pair, the young of the year and several additional young males.



Brown Falcon
Falco berigora
This bird of prey usually sees, young rabbits, small birds, reptiles and invertebrates such as grasshoppers. It is well adapted to urban areas, preferring open grassy woodland. Its feathers can be dark brown or rufous, often with a creamy white chest.



Galah
Cacatua roseicapilla
A common bird usually seen in small flocks, the Galah feeds on seeds that have dropped to the ground. The bird's tail, back and wings are light grey with a pink head, nape and chest. This species nests in tree hollows. Males have brown eyes and females have red. Its call is a loud screech.



Pacific Black Duck
Anas superciliosa
A commonly seen duck, usually found on permanent waterbodies. It feeds on plant material including seeds, as well as aquatic insects and crustaceans. Females lay their eggs in scrapes on the ground, tree hollows or nests in grass or reeds.



Tawny Frogmouth
Podargus strigoides
Well camouflaged, the Tawny Frogmouth looks just like a branch, when roosting during the day. Active at night, they hunt for large insects such as moths. Its call is a low resonant 'oom' sound.



Cattle Egret
Ardea ibis
This bird is so named because they often feed around the feet of cattle, even perching on them to pick insects or parasites off their skin. They forage in grassy areas, especially after rain, feeding on insects. Commonly seen feeding in groups or roosting along waterways. Their plumage is white, but they develop an orange tinge around the head and chest when breeding.



Gang Gang Cockatoo
Callocephalon fimbriatum
Seen in Banyule over the winter months, this bird feeds on the seeds of native trees and shrubs as well as the berries of the introduced Hawthorn. A dark grey bird with outer wing feathers washed with a dull green color. The male bird has a bright red head. Its call sounds like a creaking branch.



Powerful Owl
Ninox strenua
A shy bird, this owl roosts during the day in tall trees which give it a commanding view of its surroundings. The Powerful Owl's favourite meal is Ringtail Possum, but they also feed on gliders, Brushtail Possums, rats, rabbits and birds. Clearing of habitat has resulted in this species becoming endangered.



Welcome Swallow
Hirundo neoxena
This bird builds a cup-shaped nest made from mud, often under eaves, in sheds and under bridges. Welcome Swallows feed on small insects such as moths and midges and are often seen swooping and dipping gracefully, especially over water. Banyule Council's logo is based on the shape of the Welcome Swallow in flight.



Crested Pigeon
Ocyphaps lophotes
Occasionally seen on sports fields and grassy areas, this pigeon feeds on seeds and has a distinctive dark colored erect crest. This species has benefited from urbanisation as its preferred habitat is lightly wooded grasslands rather than thick forests. Usually seen in small groups, their wings make a whistling noise when flapped. They have a distinctive bowing and cooing display.



Grey Butcherbird
Cracticus torquatus
A carnivorous bird, this species' diet includes small birds, nestlings, reptiles and mice as well as insects, some fruit and seeds. It gets its name from its habit of wedging its prey in the fork of a tree until it is ready to eat. It hunts by the perch and pounce method, perching on a branch and then diving to the ground after prey. Common in woodlands, this bird has a melodious call and often mimics other birds.



Purple Swamphen
Porphyrio porphyrio
This bird is usually found in swamp vegetation. It eats young reed stems, as well as other plants and insects and lives in territorial groups. It usually wades in the shallows and reeds, but can run fast on land. It has a red beak and crown, a blue chest and neck and a black body, with white under the tail.



White-plumed Honeyeater
Lichenostomus penicillatus
A common honeyeater, this bird feeds mainly on manna, occasionally taking small insects from foliage. It uses its bristled tongue to lick nectar from flowers. It is very active, hopping around eucalypt branches feeding. Pairs or groups of birds call to each other constantly with soft 'chirps'.

Dusky Moorhen
Gallinula tenebrosa
Found in freshwater swamps and lakes, this territorial waterbird eats land and aquatic plants, as well as insects, fish and molluscs. At night they roost above the water in reeds or shrubs. A dark sooty brown and slate grey bird with a white line on each side of the tail, and a yellow tipped red bill.



Latham's Snipe
Gallinago hardwickii
A threatened species, Latham's Snipe migrate to the east coast of Australia in mid August to September, from their breeding ground in Japan. Wary birds, they spend most of the day hiding in tussocks and low shrubs, feeding mostly at dawn and dusk. They probe the soft ground around waterways and swamps for beetles and invertebrates.



Rainbow Lorikeet
Trichoglossus haematodus
A colorful bird that feeds on nectar and pollen as well as some insects and fruit. Lorikeets have a brush-like tongue for reaching in to flowers. They usually feed in small flocks in the early morning and late afternoon, screeching and chattering loudly.



Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo
Calyptorhynchus funereus
Seen slowly flying along in flocks or small groups, these birds feed on seeds of native plants such as banksias and hakeas, but also like the large seeds they find in pine cones. They make a loud wailing 'kee-ow' call which they repeat often.



There are many introduced (non native) animals that cause problems for native wildlife, by competing with them for food, shelter and nesting sites. Some animals, such as the feral cat and the fox, hunt and kill native wildlife such as birds, lizards and small mammals.

Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) cause increased turbidity (murkiness of water), because they disturb the layer of sediment on the bottom of streams, rivers, dams and lakes as they feed. They also disturb and uproot waterplants, reducing cover, food and habitat for other species. They compete for the same food resources, such as invertebrates, as many native fish.



Gambusia or Mosquito Fish (*Gambusia holbrooki*) are tiny fish from the USA that were deliberately introduced to control mosquito larvae in ponds and streams. They have spread rapidly and compete with native fish for insects and food. They greatly outnumber native fish in many areas. They are aggressive and can nip the fins off native fish and eat their eggs.



Foxes (*Canis vulpes*) prey on wildlife including ground dwelling mammals and birds. They also carry the skin disease mange, which can be transferred to native animals such as wombats. They often shelter under houses or in dense vegetation such as blackberries. Foxes should not be fed or encouraged. Keep an eye on your pet food and compost bin to make sure you are not providing foxes with a free feed.



Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) eat native vegetation, cause erosion through burrowing and are one of the most destructive feral animals in Australia. Council works with residents to facilitate coordinated rabbit control on private property in areas such as Lower Plenty. Contact the Wildlife Corridor Program Officer on 9457 9825 for more information.

Feral Cats (*Felis catus*) have a devastating affect on wildlife. It is estimated that each feral cat kills and eats 520 wildlife per year. The average domestic cat kills 32 each year. Multiply this by the number of feral, stray and pet cats and estimates are 211 million wildlife killed by cats each year (just in Victoria). Contact Council for information on feral cats and responsible pet ownership.

European Wasps (*Vespa germanica*) are capable of repeated bites which can be very painful. They are attracted to food containing protein or sugar and are frequent pests at BBQ's and picnics in the warmer months. They can displace native animals from tree hollows. Contact Council for information about European Wasp control.

Common Mynas (*Acridotheres tristis*) are aggressive birds that compete with parrots and small birds for nesting sites. They thrive in urban areas but not in dense bushland, so you can discourage them from your garden by ditching the lawn and planting indigenous plants. Discourage them from nesting in gutters, downpipes, eaves, natural tree hollows and artificial nest boxes.



Blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) are a problem in urban areas as well as bushland. They compete with native birds for both food and nesting sites. They also damage soft fruit such as berries and stonefruit in the garden and in agriculture.



Use this guide to identify some of the wildlife found in Banyule.



Further Information
To find out more or for a full list of Banyule's fauna, contact Council on 9490 4222.
Banyule Council maintains a database of fauna sightings. To record your sighting, please call 9457 9828 or download a fauna observation sheet from www.banyule.vic.gov.au



Acknowledgments
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Fish



Shortfin Eel
Anguilla australis
Occurs in a wide variety of wetland habitats including rivers and creeks as well as lakes and swamps. Adult eels migrate downstream upon sexual maturity to breed in the Coral Sea. Larval eels are then swept back to the coast by ocean currents, moving back upstream over several years. They feed on aquatic fauna including insects, crustaceans, molluscs and fish.

Common Galaxias
Galaxias maculatus
Adults are found in the lower reaches of coastal streams and rivers, in still or slow moving water. They can tolerate a wide range of habitat conditions and feed on small aquatic and terrestrial insects, aquatic crustaceans and molluscs.



River Blackfish
Gadopsis marmoratus
Resting during daylight hours, this fish feeds at night on aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates and small fish. It prefers streams with good cover such as fallen branches and overhanging banks. The male Blackfish guards the eggs, which are usually deposited in hollow logs, keeping them free from silt and detritus. This species is adversely affected by increased sedimentation of rivers.

Frogs



Common Froglet
Crinia signifera
A small ground dwelling frog common across Australia. Found beneath rocks and in vegetation at the edge of creeks and ponds, this frog breeds throughout the year. Its skin color is quite varied, but it usually has a mottled white granular underside. Its call is a rapid cricket-like 'crick... crick... crick...' and can be heard at all times of the day, year round.

Southern Brown Tree Frog
Litoria ewingii
Commonly found in flooded grasslands, marshlands and suburban gardens this frog is an agile jumper. Skin color is varied and can be fawn, cream, orange, light brown or sometimes green. Its call is a long 'creeeee creee creee creee'.



Southern Bullfrog
Limodynastes dumerilii
This frog is commonly heard calling at night, especially after rain. It has a very distinctive call, ending with a loud 'bonk' and is often called the Pobblebonk or Banjo Frog. It is mostly commonly found in swamps and ponds, seeking shelter under rocks and in banks during the day, emerging at night to feed.

Spotted Marsh Frog
Limodynastes tasmaniensis
Usually found around water, in dry periods this species hides in cracks in the ground or under rocks. It eats insects including flies and beetles. Its call is a rapid series of 'uks' which sounds like two stones being hit together. A slender frog with a pale smooth back that has numerous greenish spots.



Striped Marsh Frog
Limodynastes peronii
Found mostly near permanent water, this amphibian survives well in urban areas and feeds on a variety of insects including flies and moths. Its conspicuous golden or light brown back with dark brown or black stripes makes it easy to identify. Its call is a soft explosive 'whuck'.

Victorian Smooth Froglet
Geocrinia victoriana
Found in moist areas, this species lays its eggs in leaf litter on the ground. Its distinctive call is a long note followed by a series of short pips 'Graaark pip-pip-pip-pip-pip-pip-pip'.



Reptiles



Common Blue-tongued Lizard
Tiliqua scincoides
A thick bodied lizard, often seen in woodlands or gardens. It is usually mottled dark brown on the back and a light grey-brown color underneath. It eats invertebrates, flowers, fruit, carion and snails. In gardens they seek shelter amongst leaf litter, under rocks and in hollow logs.

Common Long-necked Tortoise
Chelodina longicollis
This tortoise gets its name from its distinctive long neck. Its hard shell is dark brown on top and dull yellow underneath. This tortoise eats fish, molluscs, tadpoles and crustaceans and can be found in slow moving rivers and swamps.



Eastern Brown Snake
Pseudonaja textilis
A large slender snake up to 2 metres long. Usually pale to dark brown in color with a cream or light grey under surface. This snake hunts for food during the day, eating mainly small mammals, reptiles, frogs and birds. Highly venomous.

Garden Skink
Lampropholis guichenoti
Small and slender, this lizard is grey-brown with a dark brown line along its side, pale grey flecks and a bronze head. It eats insects and invertebrates and is common in gardens and woodlands, especially under leaf litter, logs and rocks.



Marbled Gecko
Phyllodactylus marmoratus
A small, thick-tailed lizard with large, raised eyes. Usually pinky-brown in color with light and dark blotches of marbling. Its tongue is very long and its diet consists mainly of invertebrates.

Tiger Snake
Notechis scutatus
A thick-bodied, banded snake usually about 1m in length. It is highly variable in colour, ranging from olives, yellows, browns, reddish-greys or even black, with or without cross bands of varying intensity. This snake is usually found near rivers or waterways. Its diet consists mainly of frogs. This species is highly venomous.



Mammals



Common Brushtail Possum
Trichosurus vulpecula
A familiar possum often found in gardens (and sometimes houses). It feeds at night, mainly on leaves, but also eats fruits and flowers. Sleeps during the day usually in tree hollows. Easily identified by its long dark bushy tail.

Short-beaked Echidna
Tachyglossus aculeatus
A monotreme (egg-laying mammal) the Echidna has long spines and curls itself into a prickly ball when disturbed. It has a long nose and an even longer sticky tongue that it uses to lick up ants. Its powerful legs are used for digging, both to hide itself and also gain access to ant nests.



Grey-headed Flying-fox
Pteropus poliocephalus
Active at night, this bat flies off from its communal daytime roost site at dusk to feed, returning home again before dawn. An important disperser of seeds and pollen, this species feeds mainly on nectar, pollen and fruit. This bat can often be seen flying across the Melbourne night sky, or feeding noisily in flowering trees.

Koala
Phascolarctos cinereus
Sleeping during the day in the fork of a tree, the koala feeds at dusk, eating only eucalypt leaves. The Koala's digestive system is specially adapted to process the fibrous, low nutrient leaves. It only descends to the ground to move between trees. Koalas don't often drink water as they get most of the moisture they need from gum leaves.



Platypus
Ornithorhynchus anatinus
A monotreme (egg-laying mammal) the platypus has short soft hair, a sensitive duck-like bill and webbed feet. Its diet consists of aquatic invertebrates, fish and amphibians. When not swimming, the platypus lives in a burrow just above water level, often under a tangle of tree roots.

Common Ringtail Possum
Pseudocheirus peregrinus
A common resident in urban areas, this possum makes a nest from bark, leaves and grass called a drey. It eats leaves, flowers and fruits, often developing a taste for rosebuds. Feeding at night and sleeping during the day, this species uses its white-tipped tail for stability and for gripping when climbing or hanging from branches. Its call is a high pitched twitter.



Sugar Glider
Petaurus breviceps
Leaping from a tree and spreading its wing-like membrane, this mammal can glide distances of 50m. Only found in areas where there are tree hollows for shelter, the Sugar Glider feeds on sap from trees (especially wattles), insects and nectar. They make a nest of leaves in tree hollows and usually nest in groups.

Swamp Wallaby
Wallabia bicolor
This shy wallaby sleeps during the day in forested areas, emerging at night to feed on grasses, sedges and shrubs. It has a dark brown to black body with a orange-red underside. Like all marsupials, the young live in the mother's pouch.



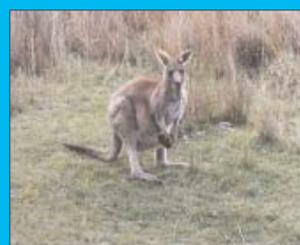
Water Rat
Hydromys chrysgaster
A strong swimmer, the water rat has partially webbed feet and waterproof fur. Found in rivers and creeks this species eats fish, crustaceans, frogs, reptiles and insects. It nests in tunnels in riverbanks. This species has a distinctive white tip on its tail.

White-striped Freetail Bat
Tadarida australis
Feeding on moths and insects, both in flight and on the ground, this bat is common in Banyule, being well adapted to urban environments. It usually nests in hollows in small groups, but may be found under bark or in tree stumps. Can form a colony of several hundred, with their young.



Common Wombat
Vombatus ursinus
Eating mainly native grasses and sedges, this solitary marsupial likes thickly forested areas, with open grassy areas nearby. When not feeding, the wombat sleeps in underground burrows. Its broad, powerful legs and strong claws are effective digging tools.

Eastern Grey Kangaroo
Macropus giganteus
During daylight hours, this marsupial rests in the shade or shelter of trees and shrubs, moving out to graze from late afternoon to early morning. They mainly eat grasses and herbs, and tend to be found in groups in open areas.



Invertebrates



Eltham Copper Butterfly
This butterfly is only found in woodland with an understory of the shrub Sweet Bursaria. Its lifecycle is intricately linked to a particular type of ant, that constantly attend the larvae, feeding on its secretions of sugar. This species is threatened due destruction of habitat and isolation of populations.

Burrowing Crayfish
Engaeus spp.
These small, freshwater crayfish are normally under 10cm in length. Rarely found above the ground or in water, they spend most of their time in underground burrows with distinctive chimney shaped entrances of pelleted soil. They favour wet, muddy areas and feed on rotting wood, detritus, roots and sometimes small animals. They can be orange, red-brown, grey-blue or purple in color.



Dragonflies and Damselflies
Dragonflies and Damselflies are colorful insects with long thin bodies, large eyes and four large wings. They are usually found near water. Only the adults fly - the juveniles or nymphs live in the water. They eat other insects, small fish and tadpoles.

Living with Wildlife

Everyone can help provide habitat for native wildlife

In your garden

- Plant a wide variety of indigenous plants - trees, shrubs, herbs and ground covers to provide food and habitat for wildlife. Thick, dense, prickly shrubs provide spots for small birds to hide, native grasses provide food for seed eaters and nectar producing plants, such as correas and native heath, attract Honeyeaters and Lorikeets. Lizards love to hide under rocks and fallen branches. Terracotta pipes on the ground can also provide refuge
- Avoid chemicals - herbicides can be toxic to frogs, pest baits can harm native creatures
- A regular supply of water will encourage wildlife - remember to keep it clean, fresh and out of reach of cats and dogs
- Don't feed native wildlife, it alters their natural behaviour and may cause dietary deficiencies and spread disease. If you plant a variety of indigenous plants, wildlife will be able to find lots of natural food in your garden
- Retain any remnant trees and vegetation on your property
- Keep your cat indoors at night. Consider an enclosed outdoor run for cats, to protect native birds, lizards and mammals

In the home

- Use plantation timber or alternative building materials - leave forests alone as wildlife habitat
- If you have a wood burning fire, make sure your wood doesn't come from native forests - removing dead trees for firewood destroys habitat for creatures that nest in tree hollows

Away from home

- Don't drop litter or cigarette butts. Wildlife such as platypus can die if trapped or entangled by litter
- Drive carefully and keep a watch out for wildlife, particularly around dawn and dusk

Injured Wildlife

Wildlife Care Network tel: 0500 540 000
Help for Wildlife tel: 0417 380 687



Banyule is home to a wide range of native wildlife including:

- 224 species of native birds
- 23 kinds of reptiles
- 22 mammal species
- 12 types of frogs
- 9 species of native fish
- and an enormous number of invertebrates

Some species such as the Noisy Miner, Australian Magpie, Red Wattlebird and the Common Brushtail Possum have adapted well to urbanisation and are commonly found in parks and gardens. Others, such as Latham's Snipe and the Eltham Copper Butterfly, have very specific requirements for survival and are only found in restricted areas of habitat.

